

Frank and Melinda Dumond
31 Walnut Ave.
East Hampton, CT 06424
December 8, 2014

Vinal Technical High School
60 Daniels St.
Middletown, CT 06457
(860) 344-7100

To Whom It May Concern:

On October 28, 2013, our son Damien Dumond was in the area of the gym at Vinal Technical High School. This is an area designated for students who arrive early by School Bus. It is also an area that normally has adult supervision, but for some reason, no adult supervision was present at the time of Damien's accidental injury. It was also reported that there was no supervision on the next day either. On the third day, the wooden pegs that caused Damien's injury disappeared and the adult supervisor was now present.

On the morning of the injury, Damien was climbing on a wooden peg board in the unsupervised gym area. As he was attempting to remove the peg from the board, it became stuck. He then gave the peg a tug and it quickly released hitting him in the mouth. He immediately started to bleed from the inside of his upper lip and around his upper left tooth. Since there was no adult supervision at this time, he ran to the nurse's office only to find that the school nurse had not yet arrived. He then ran to the main office and spoke to a woman at the front desk who did her best to clean the blood from his face. She told Damien that he should call home. Frank received the call from Damien shortly after 7:00 AM. He briefly told Frank what had happened, and that he was in a lot of pain. Frank told Damien that he was leaving his job immediately to come pick him up. On the way, Frank quickly called Damien's dentist Dr. Roman Fedorciw. Dr. Fedorciw told Frank that he would need to see Damien right away, due to the nature of the injury. Frank then picked Damien up from school and drove him directly to his dentist. Upon Damien's exam, it was determined by x-ray that the tooth was cracked below the gum line and he would need to be seen by a specialist at Central Connecticut Endodontics for an emergency root canal in order to try to save the tooth. Once at Central Connecticut Endodontics, Dr. Mark Desrosiers also x-rayed the tooth and confirmed that it was broken well below the gum line. Due to the excessive bleeding and trauma to the tooth, he could not complete the root canal for 10 days in order to allow the tooth ample time to heal. After the required 10 days, Dr. Desrosiers completed the root canal and sent Damien back to his dentist, Dr. Fedorciw, to discuss the installation of a crown. Upon Dr. Fedorciw's exam, it was determined that the remainder of the tooth was too far below the gum line to be able to apply the permanent crown. In its current condition, Damien would now need to be seen by a Periodontics Specialist who would cut the gum and bone back in order to expose enough of the tooth to attach the crown. The periodontics doctor who performed the procedure was Dr. Lawrence Gelb. After this procedure, Damien then returned to Dr. Fedorciw only to find out that there was still not enough tooth exposed to put a permanent crown, though he was able install a temporary crown. Dr. Fedorciw then told us that Damien would now need to see an Orthodontist who would apply braces that would pull the tooth down so that enough was exposed to be able to properly attach the permanent crown.

Frank contacted the school after the accident and was told that a Mr. Cap (school vice principal) was the person with whom he needed to speak. He told Frank that he was aware of Damien's injury, but that the school did not have insurance for this type of injury. We could not understand how this was the case when the school failed to supply adequate adult supervision when Damien's injury occurred. We were then told that we would have to contact our own insurance provider. Frank informed Mr. Cap that we never signed any type of release that the students who play sports would have to sign. Mr. Cap stated that it did not matter and that the school was still not responsible. Afterwards, we discussed the phone conversation with Mr. Cap and could not understand why the school would not be responsible and also wondered if the other parents of students knew this. Frank spoke with Mr. Cap again days later just to make sure we understood each other. His answer was still the same.

A few days later, Frank received a call from the school nurse wondering how Damien was doing. While Frank had her on the phone, he asked her if she was aware of the policy that Mr. Cap explained to us, that if a student was injured on school property that the school was not responsible. She stated that it did not make sense to her, but said she would look into it. A couple days later, she called Frank back and said her supervisor advised that we would need to contact our own insurance provider. It seemed odd but we did contact them and were told that our plan did not include dental coverage. We tried to explain to them that it was an injury to the mouth and just happened to involve the tooth. Anthem told us that we would need to file a grievance, which we did. This back and forth process took place over a period of many months.

Eventually, all claims were denied for this injury because of the fact that a tooth was involved. Melinda then contacted a health care advocate to try to help us with this matter. After the assistance of the advocate and many more months of effort, the claim was still denied. Not knowing where else to turn, we decided to contact the school again. This time, we were told we needed to speak with Mr. Shellman, the school principal. After a few weeks, he finally called us and asked us to make copies of all the paper work and get it to him, which we did. He said he would check to make sure that there was a report filed and get back to us. Another month went by with no response, so Melinda started calling and emailing him. Eventually, he finally emailed Melinda with the procedures on how to file a report. Melinda called the number that was provided and discovered that it was out of service. She then emailed Mr. Shellman to inform him that the number was out of service. After no answer again for another week, Melinda finally found a number on the State of CT website. She called and the woman she spoke to said she would send the procedure paperwork to us. Melinda asked her how long we had to file a claim and she stated that we had a year from date of the incident. This was a shock. We were not happy to hear this because with all the running around and back and forth with phone calls and emails between the insurance provider and school, the year timeframe had passed already. She said to file it anyway and explain all of this in the letter that you are reading.

We both are very upset with the school and the insurance company due to the lack of compassion and knowledge shown with regards to this process, as well as the extraordinary amount of time this has taken. We are just looking for our son's medical bills to be paid to date and his orthodontics bills and Dr. Fedoreiw's bill to finish with a permanent crown to be paid. We feel that the school was negligent and did not perform adequately when this accident occurred in order to properly file a claim. Instead, we were just repeatedly told that it is not their responsibility, with no explanation of the procedures that should have been required. This is a true financial hardship to our family and we would have done this much sooner if we only knew we had to. We just want these bills paid.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Respectfully,

Frank and Melinda Dumond
(860) 267-4804